Smuggled

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Smuggled

by TigerPrawn

Summary

Nigel is a smuggler of cryptids, and then he meets Cal...

At exactly 11 am there was a knock at his door and Nigel knew it would be Meyer. He was always on time. Not that this made Nigel inclined to like the man.

He'd been hired by Meyer many times over the years, and he paid on time. It always went smoothly. And even so, Nigel didn't like him. There was something about the man that creeped Nigel out, not least his line of work.

Which, to be fair, Nigel was the last person to judge, given that he made his living as a smuggler. But Meyer, he was something else. Ran some kind of actual cult, and one thing they were big on was cryptids. Not the usual mini chimeras and things like that, that you can get in pet stores. The last thing Nigel had facilitated for Meyer was a unicorn. And he was so sure that there were no damn unicorns running around the Meyer compound. Probably fucking ate the thing.

"Hello, Nigel," Meyer gave a friendly greeting and took the seat on the other side of Nigel's desk.

"Meyer," Nigel acknowledged, "What can I do for you this time?"

"I have a delivery coming from our compound in Peru, we have transport arranged, but require you to facilitate the arrival and… appropriate customs."

Nigel hummed his understanding. Whatever was being delivered - whether legal or not in Peru - was not legal in the US and Meyer needed Nigel's connections to get whatever it was smuggled into the country.

"Yup," Nigel replied, picking up his pen and tapping it against the notepad a couple of times. "What sort of weight are we talking?"

“Sixty to eighty Kilograms, more once the water has been accounted for.”

Water?

Nigel felt the hairs on his skin prickle. Water. And the weight of an average human. He swallowed.

“When is it due to be shipped?” Nigel asked, instead of the several burning questions that he couldn’t. His reputation was built on his discretion.

“In three weeks,” Meyer answered before pulling out his little pocket diary.

Nigel went through the motions - filling in the paperwork, working out which port would work best and how many officials would need to be paid off. By the time Meyer left, it was all agreed and the price set. Half of it would be in his account by the end of the day, the other half on delivery. Now Nigel just had to set it all up, and try not to dwell on it in the meantime.

Three Weeks Later

Nigel was rarely on scene when deliveries came in. Unless it was something that specifically needed his oversight, he left it to his underlings to deal with. But for this one, he just had to see what it was Meyer had asked him to smuggle in. Whether his suspicions were true.

For two reasons. Firstly, because if it was what he suspected then he had for sure undercharged Meyer. Any grade 1 cryptid came with the harshest penalties if caught, and he’d be charging Meyer that extra before releasing the goods.

Secondly, Nigel was fucking obsessed with merfolk. He had been since he was a kid. In some ways that’s what had led into this line of work. He’d started out as a small-time crook, dealing drugs for someone else. It hadn’t taken him long to rise through the ranks until he had his own enterprise. That had expanded beyond drugs, and eventually he was smuggling cryptids (grades 2 to 5). In the few years he’d been doing this though, he’d still not encountered any grade 1s - any that were in some way partially human - and now here was his chance.

His palms were sweating as he took the last drag on his cigarette before dropping it and crushing it under his heel.

“It’s loaded, boss,” one of the crew told him as they watched the rectangular container slide into place on the back of the flatbed. “Lighter than expected. Looks like there was a leak - some damage around the bottom left corner.”

“What? Hold it,” Nigel said, holding up his hand so that the driver didn’t immediately get into the cab and set off. “Need to check the fucking contents, then. Don’t want to be delivering a corpse,” Nigel told them gruffly and received similarly gruff responses.

Nigel climbed onto the back of the rig and flipped the catch on the sliding panel that would allow him to look inside. He licked his lips, trying not to show how eager he was. The metal scraped as he pushed it along and inside was almost dark. There was no lighting, only the slight bioluminescent glow from grit at the tips of the man’s toes.

His toes.

“Fuck!” Nigel spat the word and closed the hatch. He might be a cunt, but he wasn’t a fucking cunt, he had no interest in human trafficking. There probably hadn’t even been any water in there. Was Meyer trying to trick him into trafficking?

He jumped down from the back of the truck and signalled the driver over, “Go lose the paperwork.”

“Boss?”

“I want you to lose the fucking paperwork. This shipment never came in. We know nothing about it. It never arrived. Let me know if you need any cash to make that work.”

“Is it dead?”

When Nigel just glared, unanswering, he finally received a nod. This happened sometimes, usually if the product arrived dead, as rare as that was. But this guy was definitely alive. And definitely not being shipped to Meyer. He’d see what the man’s reaction was to the lost shipment, but the truth was, Nigel would rather end up putting a hit on the scumbag than become a trafficker.

With the driver gone, Nigel went back to the truck and began unlatching the end of the metal crate. With a sharp shove at one of the bolts, it finally came loose and swung down, leaving the box open enough for the light in the warehouse to spill inside.

The man was naked, curled in a ball, but thankfully fucking breathing. Nigel cursed under his breath as he removed his jacket and climbed in, putting it over the man before easing him up.

“It’s okay, you’re safe,” He said, whilst wondering if that was actually true. After all, what the fuck was Nigel meant to do with him now? Hand him over to the authorities? He’d end up in the system, and fuck knows how well he’d be taken care of. “What the fuck language do they speak in Peru,” Nigel muttered as he moved back and brought the man with him, keeping him cradled to his chest as he got out of the crate and pulled him down into his arms.

“Um, engleză?” Nigel asked in Romanian, despite thinking at the same time that Peru was probably Spanish speaking.

The man’s eyes were barely open, he was drugged and he couldn’t hold up his head. It looked like he was trying to focus on Nigel, but he was so fucking out of it he probably had no idea what was going on.

Nigel had been around drugs for long enough in his life to know this guy had been given some sort of cocktail. Probably kidnapped, drugged, put in the crate with the anticipation of still being off his face by the time he was state-side. Nigel’s anger at Meyer was a red hot flash through him and he grit his teeth.

So what now? Not giving this poor fucker to Meyer, not calling the dipshit authorities. He should probably dump him at a hospital but then he’d still end up floating in the system. It was only when he heard the driver heading back from the site office, that he made a snap decision.

He picked the guy up and carried him over to his own car. Sliding him gently onto the backseat, Nigel covered him as best as he could with the jacket and got into the drivers side.

“This never fucking happened,” he called out to the driver and received a nod in return before he gunned his engine and took off, leaving the driver to imagine that he was off to dump a dead body.

*

Nigel blew the smoke out the window as he leaned against the windowsill in his bedroom, watching the man sleep.

He was still completely out of it on whatever they'd given him, so Nigel had just slipped him into his bed and waited. And waited. It had been fucking hours.

Sure, he'd gotten on with other things. Picked up his apartment a little, made some food, had a nap on the sofa. But he kept coming back to the bedroom to watch the sleeping man. He was fucking mesmerising.

Nigel took another drag and then almost choked on it as the slow rise and fall under the blankets changed and the man took in a deep inhale. Nigel blew the smoke out the window and flicked the cigarette out onto the street before striding to the bed.

"Steady," Nigel said as the blanket began to move and then his head popped up. "You're safe here."

The man bolted upright and the covers fell down to his waist, revealing his toned chest. It only drew Nigel's eye because there was that same luminescent grit there, or at least Nigel told himself that was the only reason he was mesmerised.

"Do you want a shower? Or I can run you a bath? You're filthy. All this grit," He reached his hand out without thinking, about to touch the grit on the man's chest but his hand was quickly and painfully batted away. "Fuck!"

Nigel cursed and sprung back. The fucker could move fast.

"You understand English?" Nigel asked, as the man's expression turned to a scowl. "Fuck it," Nigel said finally after not getting a response. He walked away, going to the bathroom to run the bath.

When he stood up from turning the faucet and went to move back to the bathroom door, the man was standing there. Fully naked, watching the water run into the tub.

"Fuck!" Nigel cried out and jumped back. "Stealthy fucker."

The man looked at him then, really studying him - Nigel felt like he was looking into his fucking soul. After a long, uncomfortable silence, the man spoke, his voice cracking over a dry throat.

"Are you selling me?"

Nigel frowned at the suggestion. "I'm a smuggler, not a fucking trafficker. I pulled you out of that crate," Nigel growled. He scrubbed a hand over his face and cooled down, looking back to the faucet. "Have a bath, I can dig out some clothes. They'll be big on you, but better than…" Nigel waved his hand up and down to indicate the man's nudity. Not that he seemed to be too concerned about it.

Nigel bent over and turned off the faucet, and when he turned back the guy was right there again. He stepped into the bath before Nigel even had a chance to get out of the way. Nigel stumbled back and watched as a blissful look spread across the man's face.

"Once you're all set, we can see about uh, getting you home," Nigel was about to head back to the bedroom to get out some clothes, when a loud, wet, slapping sound drew his attention.

When he looked back to the bath, the man was relaxing back, arms hanging over the side and huge tail unfurling and slapping over the side of the bath, bioluminescent and glowing to the very tips of his fins.

Fins??

“Fuck,” Nigel blinked, stunned. “I think I made a mistake.”

*

“Are you going to deliver it to Meyer?” Darko asked from the other end of the phone. The merman was still in the tub, but Nigel had moved to the bedroom and closed the door so he could have this quiet conversation with his oldest friend and previous business partner. Darko still only moved drugs, but he was a great sounding board when Nigel needed advice.

“I don’t know,” Nigel answered honestly.

“Would it be an easier decision if it was a centaur? Or a harpy?” There was the slightest tease in Darko’s tone which made Nigel’ neck burn hot. He’d never been great at keeping his fascination with merfolk to himself. Darko had known him long enough to know enough.

“Fuck you.”

There was a chuckle on the line and then Darko gave a thoughtful hum.

“Dump it somewhere? Or just fucking sell it. You could get a tidy sum for that shit.”

The thought made Nigel’s stomach twist, and his response came without thought, “He can talk.”

“So? Centaurs can too. Doesn’t make them any less inhuman. They don’t have any fucking rights, Nigel. Would you care this much if it were a fucking circus bear or some shit?”

Nigel huffed, he probably wouldn’t. It wasn’t that he liked to see animals hurt, but business was business.

After a few moments of silence Nigel heard some commotion on Darko’s end, someone coming into his office wanting his attention.

“Do what you want, brother.” Darko finally said, “Just make sure whatever you do doesn’t get you in trouble. I gotta go.”

Darko hung up whilst Nigel was still considering his words. Considering the way he said *trouble*. He and Darko had been in plenty of trouble together and separately over the years, all kinds. Business, the law… love.

Nigel clenched his jaw and tried to push the thoughts away. That niggling slice of knowledge he was trying to ignore as it slithered through his brain - that Darko was right. It shouldn’t matter - this was a cryptid. Sure it was grade 1, but really that just meant he could get more fucking money for it. More fucking law trouble too if he was caught. And, as much as a pissant as Meyer was, he had enough connections to make life difficult for Nigel if he found out that the shipment was not missing, but in fact currently unfurled in his fucking bath tub.

Trouble. Business trouble, law trouble, and…

He opened the bedroom door to see the man… merman… standing once more naked in front of him. Fully human, covered with that same bioluminescent grit. Not grit now, he realised, tiny little scales that had dried up and shrivelled in on themselves.

Nigel let out a shuddering breath.

*

Cal - as he turned out to be called - preferred to sit in the bed than at the table or on the sofa. He piled the pillows and blankets around him so that it was soft and comfortable. And, Nigel guessed, the closest to being in the soft sand - at least more so than in hard wooden furniture.

Whilst he made himself comfortable, Nigel dragged a chair over to the bed so that they could sit and talk. Because they needed to get this shit sorted - it wasn't like Cal could stay here. And now that he turned out to be both alive and a merman, Nigel was deeply fucked. Telling Meyer to get stuffed when Nigel thought he was trying to traffic people was one thing, but this was him basically stealing Meyer's goods. The thought made his stomach flip - not because he thought he couldn't handle Meyer if it came to blows, but to think he now had a fucking merman in his possession. Something that would have given teen Nigel a fucking boner. And adult Nigel wasn't far off either.

"Did you buy me?" Cal asked when Nigel finally settled into the chair.

"What?" Nigel frowned and then it dawned on him, Cal has been off his face for much of this and had no fucking idea what was happening. "No, not me, no. I was smuggling you for someone else."

Before he could explain anything further Cal growled, "Meyer." The word was cold and sinister.

"Yeah, guess you already knew him then?"

Cal nodded. "I should have expected this from him. I…"

Cal looked forlorn and Nigel resisted the urge to reach out to offer comfort - something he rarely did even for those he was fucking. Cal eyed Nigel in the silence, as though trying to work him out. There was a strange tension in the air between them and, fuck, it felt to Nigel at least, like they already knew each other. It was fucking strange.

"You don't need to tell me anything," Nigel assured him. "I just want you to know that the reason you're here is because I made a mistake. I thought you were a human, I didn't, um, didn't realise you could part time being a merman. I thought Meyer was trying to get me involved in trafficking so I brought you here. But now I know the truth, I'm not giving you back."

Nigel meant the words even if he hadn't fully considered them before saying them. Because, truth was the easiest way out of this and to make sure Meyer didn't shit all over his business, was to hand Cal over. But there was no way he was going to fucking do that. Part of him was even starting to consider whether smuggling grade 1 cryptids was even something he wanted to do moving forward. Fuck the money.

"So, I'm yours now," It wasn't a question and there was a musical lilt to Cal's words, his lips curling into a seductive smile that seemed out of place given the context.

Nigel frowned, "No. I don't fucking own anyone. We'll sort something out."

Cal mirrored the frown and Nigel was surprised when he leaned forward sliding his hand behind the back of Nigel's neck and drawing him forward. Their lips met in a soft press that had Nigel's cock immediately twitching, but the shock of it was enough for him to recoil back.

"What the fuck?" Nigel took Cal's shoulders in his hands and moved him back, despite the almost physical pull he could feel inside him.

Cal blinked, confused. "You want me," there was a purr in his voice, and again not a question.

"I mean…" Nigel drew further back and laughed nervously, "You're attractive and--"

Nigel had read enough about merfolk - had fucking read anything and everything he could find about them actually - to realise that Cal was a siren. It wasn't a kiss, it was a manipulation. Some sort of fucking enchantment.

Somewhere at the back of his mind, Nigel knew that he could resist, even if he didn't want to. Seduction was a siren's best defence and offence. This kiss was to seal the enchantment, to have Nigel completely under his power so that Cal could have Nigel do whatever was needed to keep him safe or get him home.

But it didn't work. Or perhaps it didn't need to. Nigel - as enamoured as he was of merfolk, was resistant to the siren and the kiss became something else. The start of something else, he was sure, because that pull inside him felt like a push as well. It felt like they were chained together.

"No," Cal growled, clearly annoyed now as he shook his head. "What happened?"

"I don't know," Nigel replied softly. "You wanted to seduce me so I'll do what you want," Nigel realised aloud, "You don't need to. I told you, I'm not giving you back," He reiterated.

"What do you plan to do with me," Cal's tone was different now, defensive but maybe also a little scared.

"Whatever you want."

Cal looked at him for a moment then relaxed with a sigh. "I believe you. I… feel like I can."

Nigel nodded, he could feel it too.

"I couldn't lure Meyer, or any of them. He kept me restrained, I could never get close enough to any of them." Cal's words were full of exasperation.

Nigel nodded, sympathetic but giving Cal room to continue. He had to admit he was curious but he could sense how tentative Cal was, like they were on the brink of taking off. He couldn't imagine what it would be like to have the power to defend yourself and be unable to use it when it resulted in your imprisonment.

"Meyer found me when I was a teenager. I was stupid, wandered to shore to see what all the fuss about humans was. But I wasn't meant for the human world, I wasn't doing well. And then Stephen Meyer found me and took me in. He looked after me, he made me feel safe."

Cal shuddered and Nigel couldn't help himself, he moved immediately to the bed and took Cal into his arms. There was no resistance, in fact, Cal tucked his head under Nigel's chin and sighed, his hand lightly pressed to Nigel's chest - feeling his heart. It was fucking racing.

“Not like this,” Cal chuckled, self-deprecating. “Maybe I wanted it to be like this. Like these connections I’d heard stories about. I didn’t know what it really felt like until just now, until you.” Cal took a deep breath. “After a few years I opened up, I told him the truth about me. I showed him, and then that was it. I’ve essentially been a prisoner in the Peru compound for over a decade. Longer. I don’t know, I’ve lost count.”

“I’m so sorry,” Nigel murmured against Cal’s hair - it smelled like the ocean even though Cal likely hadn’t swum in the sea for years.

“I’m glad you rescued me, I know you’ll help me.”

“I’m a criminal,” Nigel felt the need to point out. He’d spent his life disappointing people - his parents, teachers, lovers - he didn’t want to add Cal to that list, but it also felt inevitable.

“It doesn’t matter. You’re mine, I’m yours. This connection… we have myths about it. Maybe humans do too. It’s an unbreakable connection. You were meant to find me.”

“And what was I meant to do with you?” Nigel asked, his heart thundering now.

Cal chuckled, “You’re a criminal. I’m sure you have connections enough. You can keep me safe, smuggle me as intended.”

Cal pulled back and looked into Nigel’s eyes, and Nigel felt pinned. Like one of those butterflies in a collection box. His heart was beating out of his chest when Cal leaned in and kissed him again. It was the most intimate kiss Nigel had ever had, consuming, overwhelming. It wasn’t like the previous kiss, it wasn’t a seduction - it was a consummation.

No matter what he had to do, Cal was right, he’d keep him safe.

He sank further into the kiss, further against Cal as their bodies entwined on the bed. He was sure he really had been meant to find Cal, to rescue him. To be together.

Five Years Later

“Fuck, there… There… Fucking amazing, gorgeous…” Nigel panted the words as his body was pressed over and over against the edge of the infinity pool out the back of his secluded Montenegro house overlooking Lake Skadar.

Cal’s breath was hot against his neck, and Nigel shivered every time slightly pointed teeth scraped along his skin.

Fuck he loved this. He could never get enough of it even if he tried.

Cal tightened the hand curled around Nigel’s right hip, the other was holding the side of the pool to give the merman purchase as he used the strength of his muscular tail to thrust himself forward. Deeper and harder each time, Nigel luxuriated in the sensation of Cal’s thick, prehensile, tapered cock sliding in and out of him with practised skill.

After all these years, Cal knew exactly what he fucking liked - especially like this.

Nigel wouldn’t deny that he enjoyed fucking around when Cal was in his human form too, but they both knew he preferred this. He was fucking made for this. Made for Cal.

“Oh darling, fuck…” Nigel’s words were a muttered against his damp flesh as he rested his head forward onto his arm, taking the punishing pace.

As with every time Cal was in his natural form, Nigel’s mind went back to how they met. Fate as it might have been. Whatever it was, it had resulted in Nigel eventually jacking in his operations altogether, selling up to Darko and making enough money to buy the place they had now lived in for the last three years.

In this country where there were no extradition laws, and whilst cryptids still held no rights, they were accepted. A place where they could be free to be together with only mild judgement, which Nigel didn’t give a single fuck about.

“That’s it, that’s it,” Nigel groaned over and over as he felt Cal’s forehead rest between his shoulder blades. “So good.”

“Mine,” Cal growled, moving back enough to then sink his teeth into the already scarred tissues of Nigel’s neck.

He loved this, this was what he’d always wanted before even knowing what it was. Being drawn to merfolk, enamoured by them, obsessed with them - it all led to finding Cal, to this, to being fucked by the dolphin dick of his merman lover.

As he cried out and shot his load against the side of the pool, allowing it to float away from their combined sloshing, Cal spilled inside him - filling him so much that his stomach began to distend and ache.

It was perfect. Their life was perfect. Though never in all the years before meeting Cal, had Nigel ever dreamed that he’d be living in this beautiful place with the love of his life whilst they worked to smuggle as many cryptids over the border and to safety as they could.

“Perfect,” Cal muttered against his ear as he nibbled once more at the exposed, pool-dampened skin. He had that way of saying what Nigel was thinking, or maybe reading his mind a little.

“Yes,” Nigel agreed. “Yes, you are.”

Cal chuckled, that sweet laugh Nigel had quickly fallen in love with.

He’d been smuggling his own heart this whole time, waiting for the rightful owner, and now he’d finally found him and given it to him wholly. And as he’d known from that very first night together, he had Cal’s too.

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